Dear Parents, Caregivers,

It has been a wonderful start to 2015 with over 80 new or returned student enrolments. A very warm welcome to all our new students and their families. This has value added to the dynamics of our school and of course our community. At present our student numbers are 386.3. We currently have 196 students in Primary, 93.2 in Junior Secondary and 97.1 in Senior Secondary.

We have an open door policy so please feel free to come into our school and your children’s classrooms at any time and as often as you wish. We are very proud of our students and our teachers as well as what is happening in our classrooms. Both, your child and our staff really get very excited when parents and family members visit our school. It shows that you value our work and education. That is how you get to know what really is happening in our school!

I have included an article titled ‘It’s not okay to be away …nor to be late to school’. I hope you enjoy the article and continue to work with us on our continued positive improvement journey.

Leanne Rayner

Jalun Baird and Jay-Jay Deemal enjoying the beautiful green lawns
A Wet Day in Cooktown

This year we started our term with a swimming carnival! Even though the forecast was for rain, we still had high hopes. With plenty of helpers down at the pool to set up the day was looking great. Unfortunately by 10am the rain looked like it was here to stay. Teachers, students and parents stood huddled side by side under tents and shelters while the braver ones took to the rain to compete or time keep. We kept our spirits high with dance competitions and karaoke while our swimmers braved the cold breeze and rain. Unfortunately, there is no photographic evidence of this as cameras were left safely inside due to the weather.

There were so many fantastic students who swam, danced, cheered and sang at the carnival. A huge thank you to everyone who showed house spirit and great attitude and behaviour on the day!

None of this would have been possible without the assistance of the wonderful teachers who came down to run the events. To all teachers and student helpers, I thank you sincerely. A few stand out helpers included Shaun Law for fixing our tent, Beckett Kluck and Nathan Jerome for tirelessly cleaning and packing up in the rain; and our food delivery system working under Mrs Carol Worland, Daniel O’neil and Kial White.

There were so many other outstanding students both helping and competing. It was amazing to see such great teamwork from years 4-12.

After a long day we had some great results. Overall, and still the reigning swimming carnival champions, Kennedy House on 1369 points. A close second with 1332 points, Cook.

Our age champions for 2015

9  Charlie Scott and Grace Lee
10  Jordan Lickiss and Ruby Privett
11  Kai Mclean and Shaelanee Hegamaea
12  Tom Privett and Aleisha Lyons
13  Jake Farnan and Amber Farnan
14  Dylan Gilmore and Peta Buhmann
15  Zane Stallan and Holly Farnan
16  Steven Johnson and Kodi Wright-Ross
Open  Khya Witheridge and Tahlia Roberts

CDCC—OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE
At After School Care the children will meet Educators at a designated area at their school, have their names marked off a roll and will walk or be transported in CDCC Vehicles to the OSHC at 11 Charles St. During a typical afternoon children will have the opportunity for PLAY and QUIET TIMES and will receive a NUTRITIOUS AFTERNOON TEA. A separate room is set up for children to do their HOMEWORK with ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT from the OSHC Educators.

Throughout all the components of care, the CDCC OSHC Educators will provide a high level of supervision at all times, clear Centre boundaries are set to ensure all children are SAFE. During Term 1 we will be spending Monday afternoons at Cooktown Swimming Pool. The children will be able to enjoy a refreshing swim whilst being supervised by CDCC OSHC staff.

Gymnastic classes can also be transported to and from the session in CDCC’s bus staff.

For further information please contact Tegwyn the CDCC OSHC Coordinator at:
11 Charles St Cooktown  Phone: 4069 6098  Mobile: 0458770842

AFTER SCHOOL CARE
- 3pm - 6pm week days
- Cost $18 before CCB & CCR

IMPORTANTLY
After CCB some families are paying from as little as $4 per day (in actual out of pocket money) for an afternoon of After School Care.

VACATION CARE
- 8am - 6pm week days
- Cost $50 before CCB & CCR
Mr Lingard and 7L

So far this term, the amazing creative writers in 7L have been writing narratives as part of our NAPLAN preparation. We have been working really hard on our ‘sizzling starts’ – where the story drops you right into the action. Without an interesting and engaging introduction to a story, it’s very easy for the reader to lose interest. Two of our writers would like to share some of their work with you. These are great examples of an engaging and interesting start to a story that leaves on a ‘cliff hanger’; where the reader is eager to know what happens next.

“Go, go, go!” shouted the Commander. I jumped out of the plane with fear and into the dark night. I grabbed my flare from my back pocket and attempted to light it. With the ground below me quickly approaching, I began to see the bloody battlefield and hear the bullets fly past my ears.

With trembling hands, I pulled the cord and released my parachute. I landed heavily on the battlefield with death everywhere around me. I quickly ran for shelter behind a broken, deserted house. I knocked down the door with the butt of my rifle and scanned the room for movement. Nothing. Suddenly, a red dot appeared from out of nowhere and rests directly below my heart. “SNIPER!!” someone shouted, as I hear the sound of a rifle bullet echoing through the night sky…..

By Tom Privett, 7L.

BOOM, BOOM, BANG, BANG! Walking onto my front porch, my eyes glance towards the horrible noise coming from the new owner next door. It’s Bob. I should have known. My arch enemy from high school. I guess this is his way of showing off again. He was never very bright at anything, really. The house shadows me in a gloomy manner and two cracked windows of the attic look over me as the door slams shut.

“Hi Bob”, I wave, as I welcome him to the neighbourhood. He approaches me with a proud look on his face. “I’m renovating my new house, all by myself” he says with a growl. I look down at his fingers. Scratches and nails scar him like staples on paper. “If you’re so good at building, perhaps you should enter the building contest”, I suggest. “Maybe I will, maybe I won’t” he quickly spits out.

“Erm, ok then, see you later, Bob”, as I turn to my door and walk away.

Over the coming days, the repairs to his house need repairing themselves. I thought about helping, but that would only end in trouble.

SMASH! I hear a revolting, sustainable sound coming from next door. I quickly steer my eyes towards the horrible disaster. There, I see Bob, screaming desperately for help…..

By Ashlee Madden, 7L.

I would like to offer a huge congratulations to everyone who participated in this years swimming carnival! It was great to see so many swimmers taking to the water and giving their best effort. An extra special congratulations goes to Jake Farnan, Amber Farnan and Ella Hartwig from 7L who competed in all events and won an amazing number of ribbons. Jake and Amber also won the age champion awards! Well done! - Mr Lingard 7L.

Live Learn Leap &AFL Cape York will be holding a ‘Six Sport Initiative’ coaching course.
The sports covered will be AFL, Basketball, Netball, Touch Football and Hockey. This will be held at the PCYC Sunday 22nd March and the cost is FREE. Registration forms are available at the office or at the PCYC.

Alternatively you can contact Cameron Campbell on 0400962259 or email at Cameron@livelearnleap.com.au.
After three years of teaching French (LOTE) at Cooktown SS, I interviewed a number of students about their opinion of the subject. The responses were both varied and interesting to say the least. Some were more than unexpected.

Starrlia Colley “I like it. C'est super!”

Mischa Rothlisberger “It's hard for me. It's a new language for me to learn. But there are a lot of French backpackers passing through at home.”

Tim Vela “It's useful, if you want to go to France”

Tom Privett “It's fun”

Kale Lane-Ritchie “It’s a fun language to learn”

Anton Moessner “It’s pretty cool to learn another language and earn blue tickets”

Jessi Darvell “I get to draw pictures of dead people”

Amber Farnan “I enjoy the opportunity to be creative, like making cartoons”

Joel Rothlisberger “It's cool. We get to learn new words”

Always good to hear the students’ perspective on your subject.

Jo Buzza  LOTE teacher

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Prep/1B

We have made our own classroom rules!

We came up with them as whole class and drew pictures of what these rules may look like.

Our classroom rules remind us to be Safe, Respectful Learners inside and outside of our classroom.

They are:

- Whole Body Listening during learning time
- Try your best and be brave
- Be kind and be a friend
- Keep you and your friends safe

We hope you like our great poster. We are very proud of it!

Thanks,

Mr Kirk and Year 8K

First and foremost, I would like to thank all the staff and students at Cooktown State School for making me feel so welcome.

The commitment and dedication of the staff at the school to improve student learning is astounding.

This term in geography, year 8’s are learning about earthquake epicentres and the science behind their creation. Additionally, our class has memorised most of the periodic table and will be conducting a variety of chemistry experiments in the upcoming weeks.

It has been a thoroughly enjoyable start to the term in 8K and it was great to see our class receive the ‘Attendance Award’ last Monday with an impressive 96% attendance.

Mr Kirk – 8K
**PREP NEWS**

Prep students are having a lot of fun in class learning many things. We have had fun:

- Being scientists in the garden
- Sorting objects
- Flipping sight word eggs
- Using the listening post
- Practicing our handwriting
- Reading with Mrs Stack

We also get to sing songs and dance every day. We love Prep!!!

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**News From The Special Education Program**

This term certainly has had a busy start with new enrolments in Prep and in Junior Secondary.

Some staff movements and role description changes for 2015 to keep our families informed are as follows.

Roslyn Serginson (SWD Teacher of the Deaf) is based out of the Prep classroom working with 4 high support students and will not be doing the ECDP (Early Childhood Development Program) role this year. The HOSES of the Cooktown SS Cluster Michael Serginson, will assume this role and will be meeting with families, early childcare facilities/educators and community health teams to identify and support these pre-Prep aged children. The HOSES will also be supporting the cluster schools of Bloomfield River SS, Rossville SS, Laura SS, Lakeland SS and consult with Hopevale CYAAA in the support of students verified with a disability and the teaching teams in these sites.

Joining the team again is Tracey Zahnleiter as SWD teacher. Tracey will be delivering Literacy and Numeracy programs, providing support to junior secondary classes and be teaching two subjects in the secondary school (CALM, Yr 10 Art).

Rachel Morgan will also be working as SWD teacher on Tuesdays and every second Monday. Rachel has unfortunately taken leave for family reasons and we wish her all the best and a speedy return.

I would also like to welcome Stephanie Rex who has joined the SWD team in Bloomfield River SS as the Teacher of SWD for that school.

Carole Lemon and Rebecca Payne are our Teacher Aide Education Interpreters (TA-EI) and we welcome Julie Protheroe who has also joined this team as a new TA-EI. Damien Silvester is once again our itinerant Teacher Aide Auslan Language Model (TA:ALM) who will visit us several times each term to work with our interpreters and students.

Linda Dukes, Jeff Gott, Shaan Mitchell and Julie Protheroe will be our SWD Teacher Aides. Krys Waugh who provides administration support to the SEP has also taken leave and a replacement will be advised in the near future.

A new face in our external support providers from EQ is Bronte Brook who is the SLP (Speech Language Pathologist) for our Cluster, she replaces Tina Bryson who has gone Part-time and changed her service locations. She visited the school last week working with the Prep classes, and updating speech programs for students and delivered the Mt Isa Oral Language Speech program to teachers of Prep. This program will be used in the Prep classrooms to promote the development of oral language and provide support to teachers and staff in assisting students to strengthen their oral language skills.
4/5 P SCIENCE

In 4/5P Science this semester we are investigating life cycles. Our focus will be on the relationship between living things and their dependence on their environment. We will look at how plants and animals survive based on their individual needs. Throughout the semester we will be conducting many interesting investigations to determine the basic needs of plants and animals. Our first investigation is to grow a seed head by providing our seeds with the basic needs to survive. Students will be making a time-lapse video of their seed heads growing “hair” over the next 5 weeks.

VISUAL ARTS – OFF TO A GREAT START!

The Visual Arts has had a great start to 2015 with vibrant class activity and great works already underway.

We welcome back Tracey Zahnleiter as the Year 10 Visual Arts teacher. Year 12’s are currently preparing for their first of two bodies of work – Social Commentary.

The year 11 cohort including Visual Art and Certificate III students is the largest it has ever been – 17 students who are currently studying Still Life.

Students are in the process of copying great Still Lifes throughout history.

Year 10’s are looking at the Self Portrait and Year 9’s are studying Grid Portraiture. I am looking forward to seeing what our wonderful students produce in 2015!

Mrs Hall
It’s not okay to be away ... nor to be late to school

When kids miss school, not only is their academic progress impeded, forcing them to catch up on missed work (which some never do), they often miss important interactions with their peers which can compound issues of social isolation and low self-esteem.

One of the most important things you can do to ensure your child has a bright future is to make sure he or she goes to school every day—and gets there on time.

It sounds simple, but it’s true. The correlation between school attendance and children’s achievement levels is well-established. The more time kids spend at school, the more likely they are to experience school success.

Conversely, according to a report from the Victorian Auditor General, students who are regularly absent from school are at the greatest risk of dropping out of school early, and of experiencing long-term unemployment.

When kids miss school, not only is their academic progress impeded, forcing them to catch up on missed work (which some never do), they often miss important interactions with their peers which can compound issues of social isolation and low self-esteem. Also, many teachers tell me, it’s often the kids who can least afford to take time off school who are most likely to be serial absentees.

Of course, most people know this intuitively, yet school absenteeism is a huge problem in Australian schools—and much of it is parent-condoned.

It’s hard to get an accurate picture across the country but it would appear that Australian students miss an average of between 12 and 15 days per school year, with parent-condoned absenteeism highest among young primary-aged children.

That adds up to a year’s lost schooling over the school-life of a child. In today’s highly competitive world, this rate of absenteeism is alarming, putting our kids at a distinct disadvantage.

That’s not a reason to be away!
It’s now commonplace for children to stay away from school for reasons that would have been unheard of just twenty years ago. These include staying away to celebrate their own or a sibling’s birthday; being absent because they stayed up too late watching television; going shopping for clothes; an extended long weekend; and kids not wanting to take part in a sports day or special school event.

This type of absenteeism sends a strong message to kids that parents don’t really value learning or their children’s school experiences.

Australian kids only spend 15% of their total time at school. They spend more time asleep than they do at school. So we need to maximise every day to get full value. That means turning up to school every day, on time.

Being late is not okay either.
Missing a few minutes each day may not seem like a big deal but your child may be missing more than you realise if he or she is continually late.

Current research shows that mornings for most children are the most productive time of the day, with 10.00am the peak period for productivity. When children arrive late and take time to settle as they inevitably do, valuable learning time is lost.
... It's not okay to be away... nor to be late to school...

It takes strong parenting...
As a parent myself I know how persuasive children of all ages can be when it comes to taking a day off school. It takes a strong will to resist the persistent pressure that kids can bring to bear, particularly if they play the guilt card with comments such as "It's not fair that I have to go to school today because Aunty is coming to visit!" Nice try. But the answer should be "No!".

As parents we need to make a commitment that our kids make the most of their precious time at school. That means that we send them to school every day, on time and ready to make the most of the school day.

Of course, there will be times, such as illness or genuinely extenuating family circumstances, when kids should be away. But these need to be a rarity rather than the norm.

It's reassuring to know that you increase their chances of future success just by making sure they turn up to school every day. And of course regular school attendance also helps kids prepare for the workforce, where it will be expected that they turn up each day work-ready. The real world is unforgiving of those who stay away with NO EXCUSE.

AS A PARENT:

- Commit to sending kids to school every day.
- Make sure kids arrive at school and class on time.
- Inform the school when they are away, sending medical certificates and other evidence of genuine absence.
- Consider catching-up on missed work.
- Make kids who are away stay in their bedroom – that is where ill kids should be.


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